

Abstract

Novel compositions and methods of treating and preventing a viral infection are provided. A method of blocking a viral infection facilitated by a serine proteolytic (SP) activity is disclosed, which involves administering to a subject suffering or about to suffer from a viral infection a therapeutically effective amount of a substance having serine protease inhibitory activity or serpin activity. Among the substances found to be useful are α_1 -antitrypsin (AAT), peptide derivatives from the carboxy terminal end of AAT and synthetic drugs mimicking the action of such substances. The invention is particularly well suited for checking a viral infection mediated by members of herpesviridae family.